

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

December 7, 2011

1. Call to Order

CHAIR SANDRA KELLY (Psychology) called the meeting to order, and welcomed Faculty Senators, University officers, and guests.

2. Corrections and Approval of Minutes

CHAIR KELLY asked for corrections to the minutes of the meeting of November 2, 2011. There were no corrections and the minutes were approved as written.

3. Reports of Committees

a. Senate Steering Committee, Professor Rebekah Maxwell, Secretary

PROFESSOR MAXWELL (Law Library) brought forward an appointee for a vacant partial term on the Committee on Honorary Degrees. This term runs through August 15, 2012. For vacant terms of a year or less, the Steering Committee may appoint willing volunteers, and appoints Professor Jeanette Jerrell (Medicine) to this vacancy. Professor Maxwell thanked Dr. Jerrell for her willingness to serve and then presented the annual appeal for volunteers for faculty committees.

The annual volunteer form has been distributed, and Professor Maxwell encouraged Senators and faculty to use the form to volunteer for committee service in the coming year. Volunteerism has been on the decline in recent years, and many committees are understaffed when they begin their work. Professor Maxwell urged faculty members to get involved in faculty governance through the committees. It's a great way to make connections, learn how the University works, and make a positive difference.

b. Committee on Curricula and Courses, Professor Peter Binev, Chair

PROFESSOR BINEV (Mathematics) reported new changes in courses and curricula from the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Hospitality, Retail, and Sport Management, the School of Music, and System Affairs and Extended University (please see attachment, pages 10 - 21).

The Committee recommended that the Faculty Senate accept the changes. The changes were approved.

4. Reports of Officers

PRESIDENT HARRIS PASTIDES greeted his faculty colleagues throughout the University system and thanked Chair Kelly for her willingness to serve as Chair of the Faculty Senate. He thanked Past Chair Patrick Nolan for his extraordinary service, which the Senate recognized with a round of applause.

The President opened his report with an update on the University event of 11-11-11, the start of the public phase of our capital campaign called “Carolina’s Promise.” The goal for this campaign is \$1 billion. It is the largest monetary campaign in the history of any institution in South Carolina. We are one of only about 30 universities in the nation with a capital campaign of \$1 billion or more.

President Pastides expressed confidence that the University of South Carolina can reach this goal. As of November 10 of this year, we had a total of \$529 million, so we are well underway. The President noted that this total includes a \$30 million gift provided by Bill and Lou Kennedy of Orlando, Florida. One of the Kennedys is an alumna of USC’s College of Journalism and Mass Communications, and one is an alumnus of the College of Pharmacy. They are endowing a new program that will train pharmacy students in such practical aspects as entrepreneurship and pharmaceutical manufacturing. The Gamecocks will be playing football in Orlando on January 2, and the Kennedys will be hosting a party for USC friends.

The November 11 event was extraordinary. USC’s departments of theatre, music, and dance collaborated to put on the event, which reproduced the Horseshoe inside the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center. Most of the speakers at the event were students and included:

- Elizabeth Wilson a junior from Georgetown, South Carolina, who has 5 majors, is studying 3 languages simultaneously, and is planning to graduate in May after accomplishing all this in 3 years.
- Michael Roth, our All-American baseball pitcher.
- Brent McCauley and Michael Hunter, two recent graduates, who are biking and blogging to raise money for educational programming at inner city schools.

The event emphasized Focus Carolina, the University’s strategic plan, which includes seven focus areas:

- Educational quality
- Leadership
- Innovation
- Diversity
- Access
- Global competitiveness

- Community engagement

President Pastides noted that we are not restricted to seven focus areas, but believes that these seven goals embody the great aspirations of our University. He closed his report with a restated commitment to faculty hiring and finding a way to improve salaries and benefits in the coming year.

PROFESSOR AL PAKALNIS (Medicine) asked for a breakdown of the funds raised in the capital campaign as re: restricted endowment v. total endowment.

PRESIDENT PASTIDES reported that the current total endowment was around \$400 million, but that amount varies with the performance of the stock market. He noted that the great majority of the funds raised by the capital campaign will be restricted, but that his goal was to try to increase the amount of unrestrictive funding.

PROVOST MICHAEL AMIRIDIS greeted his faculty colleagues and reported on his recent meeting with the long-term strategic planning committee of the University's Board of Trustees. He illustrated his report with a series of PowerPoint slides providing graphic representation of the three aspects of academic involvement and responsibility: innovative teaching, a robust research program, and significant community engagement. The Provost presented a set of metrics for these aspects that exactly follow the University's strategic plan that has been developed through Focus Carolina and Advance Carolina.

These metrics have come to be known as the University's academic dashboard, and allow us to document and monitor our progress, compare and contrast ourselves with other institutions, and set targets for the future. The University has set preliminary targets and preliminary strategies to take us through the next three years on a 10-year continuum. These targets and strategies have been under development within the Provost's Office, which will be soliciting input from the deans and units.

Provost Amiridis noted that two questions arise when an institution decides to construct an academic dashboard:

1. What are the metrics that you are going to use?
2. What are the comparison groups that you are going to use?

It's important to have a relatively small number of metrics, even for a complex organization, and to select parameters that have a broad impact. In an academic setting, the pivotal groups are

students and faculty. In selecting a comparison group, it is important to select universities that have similar missions and deal with similar issues.

The Provost presented eight parameters, four associated with students and four associated with faculty:

The student parameters:

1. Total size of the undergraduate enrollment.
2. Average SAT score.
3. Freshmen to sophomore retention rate.
4. Six-year graduation rates.

The faculty parameters:

1. What is the size of the faculty? Do we have enough faculty members to do the job that we need to do? What is our student to faculty ratio?
2. How much research money do we bring in? What is the quality of our research?
3. What kind of national awards do our faculty members receive?
4. What is the number of doctoral degrees that we award? One could argue that this could be a student metric because these are graduate doctoral students but one could also argue that this is the highest metric in terms of productivity of the faculty members because when we produce a doctoral degree it is actually the pinnacle of what we are doing in terms of education. It involves everything else that we do in terms of scholarship, research, awards and, in fact, it enhances significantly the reputation of the institution.

The universities that we've identified as peer or peer aspirant institutions are flagship campuses. Our peer group is the group with which we compete in terms of attracting undergraduate students. Our peer aspirant group looks better than we do in terms of metrics; they are where we want to be.

The Provost's slide presentation highlighted the following points:

Total Enrollment: Over the last decade, we have increased the undergraduate enrollment by roughly 40%. Our peer and peer aspirant institutions are also getting bigger. Our numbers are trending up; our freshman class ten years ago was approximately 3,110 and now we are at 4,600. We are now at capacity in terms of infrastructure, labs, classrooms, residence halls, and faculty/student services. We cannot continue to increase the size of the freshman class, although we have 10% more applications this year than we had last. Our plan is to keep freshmen enrollment constant for the near future and our best estimate is that by doing so we are going to

level out somewhere between 24,000 – 25,000 undergraduate students in another two to three years.

SAT Scores: The SAT score as a single descriptor does not give an accurate measure of the quality of an individual student, which is why our admissions process takes a more holistic approach that factors in a student's GPA, as well as writing samples and recommendation letters. However, SAT scores serve well as descriptors for large numbers of students. Our SAT scores have increased by about 100 points over the last decade. The average SAT score of this year's freshman class is 1,199 and it is the best SAT score that we've ever had at this institution. We have set a goal of 1,225 over the next three years, but it will be difficult to get the SAT scores significantly higher because we are now working in a very constrained environment. While our overall SAT scores have gone up, the average SAT scores of high school graduates in South Carolina have not gone up, so we are competing for the same pool that we were competing for 10 years ago. We are also constrained by our desire to maintain a reasonable percentage of in-state versus out-of-state students, and by our mission to be accessible to all South Carolinians provided that they have a reasonable probability for success on this campus. Bridge programs to enhance student success could lead to enhanced roles for the regional campuses.

Freshman-to-Sophomore Retention Rates: Somewhere between 10% and 15% of freshmen who start with us are not with us in the second year. This trend could be caused by the financial crisis, or affected by student-service issues, and we are developing strategies to improve our retention rates. We want to be at a 90% retention rate in five years.

Six-Year Graduation Rates: We are using 6-year graduation rates because more students are electing not to finish in four years. They study abroad and participate in coops and research experiences, which extends their anticipated graduation dates, but six years is the maximum. We have set out goal at 75% for graduation rates. We intend to do this not through grade inflation and cheapening the degree, but through improving the quality of our educational processes and student services while maintaining and even raising our academic standards over time.

Student-to-Faculty Ratio: Provost Amiridis expressed concern about this metric, as the University is not satisfied with its student-to-faculty ratio and wants to bring it down. Achieving a lower ratio will depend on the successful implementation of the faculty replenishment initiative, which seeks to hire 200 new tenure/tenure-track faculty over the next four years. We want to get our student-to-faculty ratio back to around 17.

Research Expenditures: Research expenditures are not always the same as research awards. Many awards are made to collaborative projects involving multiple institutions. Research expenditures involve the portion of the award that actually stays at USC. Professor Nagarkatti,

USC's new Vice President for Research, has set a goal for total awards at \$300 million, and expenditures at \$250 million. This will bring us in line with our peer group and position us to move into the peer aspirant group.

National Awards: This is the metric in which USC currently performs the best. In terms of national awards that our faculty receive, we are 31st in the nation. Even the top universities don't get more than 20, and we received 14 in the last year. Our goal is to start trending toward 20.

Number of Doctoral Degrees: Our figures in this metric have remained basically flat over the last ten years. The Provost suggested that our budgetary system has influenced this metric, and the University will be developing strategies to address the gap. The Provost's office is gathering input from the College of Arts and Sciences, the University's biggest producer of doctoral degrees.

The Provost observed that he had been questioned by faculty members about the fact that there is no metric for faculty publications. The reason for this is that standards for scholarship vary widely between colleges and disciplines, and the variables involved cannot be reduced to one number that will apply across the board. Additionally, scholarship and publication are the underlying foundation of many of the variables that we are tracking, such as research expenditures, national awards, and doctoral degrees awarded.

Now that we have identified the metrics and set target goals, Provost Amiridis and the University's Vice-Provosts will be collaborating with the deans and the units to finalize strategies. The Provost noted that we will not have the funding to apply all of the strategies at the same time, so we will have to prioritize in terms of impact versus cost.

PROFESSOR AL PAKALNIS (School of Medicine) asked what our peer institutions were doing in terms of strategies to get their metrics up.

PROVOST AMIRIDIS explained that, while the concept of an academic dashboard is not our invention and it is in use by some other institutions, not all of them are transparent about the way they evaluate their metrics and develop their strategies.

PROFESSOR PAKALNIS wondered what is the most high-impact thing we could do.

PROVOST AMIRIDIS replied that retention and graduation rates are extremely important right now and, to improve those metrics, we will need to decrease the student-to-faculty ratio.

PROFESSOR GREG WILSBACHER (University Libraries) asked how the University's libraries fit within the academic dashboard and whether there had been any discussion about library faculty to student ratios at peer and peer aspirant institutions.

PROVOST AMIRIDIS observed that our libraries will have particular impact on the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate and the 6-year graduation rate. Libraries have become a congregation and collaboration space for students and library faculty are trained to provide student support that is critical for undergraduate success. The Provost also noted that having a strong research library will help boost the metrics for national awards and research expenditures.

The Provost noted that he had not seen any statistics on library faculty-to-student ratios at peer or peer-aspirant institutions.

5. Report of the Secretary

There was no report.

6. Report of the Chair

CHAIR KELLY noted that she was completing her first month as Chair of the Faculty Senate, and observed how inspiring it has been for her to see the faculty committees working hard to affect positive change at USC. She provided an overview of some of the committee initiatives currently underway:

- Faculty Welfare has been very busy on a number of issues looking again at the N parking lot issue and making sure that faculty have enough parking spots. Hopefully, we will have some resolution on that in January. The committee will be meeting with Dr. Christine Curtis and Provost Amiridis this Friday to talk about salary faculty issues and hopefully they will have a full report in the spring.
- Both the Committee on Curricula and Courses, as well as the Committee on Scholastic Standards and Petitions, are working with the Regional Campuses to address a number of the issues that are quite complicated in melding the Regional Campuses with USC and the resolution of those issues will make all of the institutes much stronger. Some of those issues will be coming to the Faculty Senate for discussion in the spring.

Curricula and Courses and Dr. Binev are working to make curriculum changes occur more smoothly as the process becomes electronic. The Carolina Core is resulting in a lot of course changes; those probably will be coming through in a big wave in the spring.

7. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

8. New Business

There was no new business.

9. Good of the Order

There were no announcements for the good of the Order.

10. Announcements

The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be on Wednesday, February 1, at 3:00 p.m., in the Law School auditorium.

11. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was seconded and passed.